

By air mail
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Aerogramme



Be proper
addressee

POSTCODE

The Head Teacher of
Mrs Christa Mc Aniff's School,
Concorde,
New Hampshire,
U. S. A.

Royal Mail

Sender's name and address

MRS D. I. JONES,
10, PECKED LANE,
BISHOP'S CLEEVE, CHELTENHAM,
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An aerogramme should not contain any enclosure

To the Head Teacher.

10, Pecked Lane,
Bishops Cleeve,
Cheltenham, Glos.
GL52 4JE.
ENGLAND

Dear Sir,

I hope you will not feel that I am intending from the wrong motives into what must be a period of intense shock and mourning for you and your school. As a newly retired school teacher I had identified very strongly with Christa McAuliffe's task. I had thought deeply about how I would have used the limited time at my disposal if I had been chosen to go in her place. Therefore I felt a very real sense of shock at the sudden end of her mission. I couldn't put my feelings into words until the night of February 2nd when our news programme showed us the small flame that began the hantocausr. The scientific correspondent was talking us through the time sequence in a dis-passionate voice when suddenly the words I've written below came to me.

Challenger

Rapacious spark, miniscule and weak,
Unaware, as yet, of the havoc you might wreak;
Jealous perhaps, of Challenger's powerful, fiery trail,
You gathered to yourself some of its force, and together
Blazed the trail.
That extinguished the star-stuck sparkle from the
eyes
Of countless earth bound children who watched
their teacher die!
You all consuming greed taught them a bitter
Lesson from the sky.

But children, you can garner more than grief from
this,
And when your weeping's done,
For every misplaced spark, seek out the obverse one —
The flame that will ignite your heart, enable you
to rise
Above the debris of despair. Look up again towards
the skies,
Accept the challenges of life, and soar
Hopefully, courageously, whilst you explore
The hidden face of destiny.

I belong to a small writer's circle & when I read it to them they suggested that I send it to you. They felt that your children might like to know that people in other countries could identify with their grief and want to help them through it. Therefore I am taking the liberty of writing to you including my poem. If it is of any use please use it in any way you see fit. I send with it my sincere sympathy to you, your staff and school. If you find any appropriate opportunity to express my condolences to Mr McAuliffe and his family or to any of the other relatives of the crew of Challenger 7, could I ask you please to do so? We are many miles apart, but I can assure you that you have all been very close to the hearts of all my teaching colleagues. We hope that a healing will take place with the passing of time.

Yours faithfully,
Doreen J. Jones